



FIRE MARSHAL BULLETIN

Bulletin No. 7
Rev. 3/98
Page 1

Outdoor Storage of Forest Products

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During dry seasons many communities will lack adequate water supplies to cope with the ever present threat of fire. Extra effort of all concerned must be exercised in the area of fire prevention to cope with this very serious matter. The following information and guidelines are being provided to local fire authorities so as to minimize the number of potential fire hazards to northern communities from outdoor storage of forest products.

Log Storage Yards - General:

Fire loss experienced in outside storage of logs indicates that large undivided piles, congested storage conditions, delayed fire detection, inadequate fire protection, and ineffective fire fighting tactics are the principle factors that allow log pile fires to reach serious proportions. The fire hazard potential inherent in log storage operations with large quantities of combustible materials can best be controlled by a positive fire prevention program under the direct supervision of top management and should include:

- (a) Selection, design, and arrangement of storage yard area and handling equipment based upon sound fire prevention and protection principles.
- (b) Facilities for early fire detection, transmission of alarm, and fire extinguishment.
- (c) Fire lanes to separate large piles and provide access for effective fire fighting operations.
- (d) Separation of yard storage from mill operations and other exposing properties.
- (e) Regular yard inspections by trained personnel, including an effective fire prevention maintenance program.

Basic Log Yard Protection:

In all log storage operations, provisions should be made for early fire detection and extinguishment. This requires watchman and alarm service, fire brigade manpower and extinguishing equipment and ready access by means of fire lanes into all parts of the storage area so that fire extinguishing equipment can be promptly brought to the site of the fire. All sides of each cold deck should be accessible by means of fire lanes. A fire lane width of 1 1/2 times pile height, but not less than 20 feet, is recommended with fire lanes between alternate rows of two pile groups providing a clear space of at least 100 feet. The length of each cold deck should not exceed 500 feet. Fire lanes for access across each end providing a clear space of at least 100 feet to adjacent pile rows or other exposed property should be provided. Where practical, greater widths are desirable to minimize the effects of radiated heat, particularly in high piled yards (see figure 1).

Some of the preceding information was taken from National Fire Protection Association Standard 46, Recommended Safe Practice for Storage of Forest Products. Log storage not in compliance with these

standards, may be considered a fire hazard under the provisions of Act 207, P.A. of 1941, as amended, the "Michigan Fire Prevention Act." A fire official finding existing forest product storage locations not in compliance should take the necessary action in accordance with Section 8 of Act 207 to resolve the situation.

If you have any questions regarding this bulletin, please contact the Fire Marshal Division at (517) 322-1924.

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